

February 18, 2021

House Committee on Water
Representative Ken Helm, Chair
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Helm and Members of Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 3089. The City of Gresham supports this legislation, which establishes a drinking water and sewer ratepayer assistance fund administered by the Housing and Community Services Department.

As in other communities throughout the state, Gresham residents have endured significant financial hardship during the pandemic. Utility costs are a significant component of the overall cost of housing, meaning that the ability to pay for water and sewer service is critical to housing stability. Moreover, having access running water is essential to quality of life. For these reasons, HB 3089 is important and timely. It also complements existing City of Gresham efforts, including a current freeze on water shut-offs and a utility/garbage financial assistance program.

The City of Gresham supports efforts to maintain housing stability and funding for essential services. As such, Gresham supports the establishment of the Public Drinking Water and Sewer Ratepayer Assistance Fund and the Oregon Housing and Community Services grants it will provide to qualified organizations to distribute this bill payment assistance to low-income households.

We hope you will vote yes on HB 3089.

Sincerely,



Brian Monberg
Government Affairs Manager